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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this 1969 study were to determine: (1) if differences existed in the self concepts of Negro, Anglo, and Spanish American adolescents and (2) the extent to which these differences were influenced by ethnic group membership, socioeconomic position, and sex. The sample for the study was made up of 425 Anglo, 40 Negro, and 142 Spanish American ninth-grade students in a school district in south central New Mexico. Instruments used in the study were the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS) and the Hollingshead Two Factor Index of Social Position. Results of the analysis indicated that of the 14 indices of self concept assessed by the TSCS, 4 scores were affected by the ethnicity variable. However, total self concept score was not significantly different for any of the 3 ethnic groups or for socioeconomic position. Male subjects had higher self concepts than female subjects with regard to physical appearance, health, skills, and sexuality. (TL)

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SELF CONCEPT: A COMPARISON OF SPANISH-AMERICAN, NEGRO, AND ANGLO ADOLESCENTS ACROSS ETHNIC, SEX, AND SOCIOECONOMIC VARIABLES

by

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INTRODUCTION

A number of theorists (e.g., Henton and Johnson[1]) have indicated that social and cultural factors play an extensive role in development of the self concept. The self concept develops out of a social definition of the individual's relationship to the world about him (Kinch[2]; Broom and Selznick[3]). Gayle[4] contended, furthermore, that the influence of subcultural ethnic and socioeconomic factors will permeate the developing self concept of the child. However, a search of the literature revealed that there exists a considerable amount of confusion with regard to the extent to which sociocultural factors influence the self concept.

A review of studies on the self concept which have investigated sex differences and socioeconomic class reflected that research up to 1958 was filled with inconsistencies and contradictory results, the resolution of which depends on further investigation.[5] In addition, studies which have dealt with self concept and ethnic group differences have, with few exceptions, examined only Negro and white groups. Researchers such as Demos[6] and Anderson and Safar[7] demonstrated that differences exist in attitudes and achievement when Spanish-American children are compared to Anglo children. However, studies dealing with the self concept in relation to one of the largest minority groups in the United States, the Spanish-American population, have been minimal.

The purposes of the present study were to determine: (1) if differences existed in the self concept among Negro-, Anglo-, and Spanish-American adolescents and (2) the extent to which these differences were influenced by ethnic group membership, socioeconomic position, or sex, or the interaction among these variables.

The rationale for this study comes from the inadequate knowledge and understanding of the contributing factors which are instrumental in the development of an individual's self concept. Many problems exist with the variety of techniques and designs used in studies of the self concept. Many researchers have used different measures of self concept and different ways of establishing socioeconomic class position, thus restricting the comparison of results and the ability to generalize beyond the specific study. Furthermore, only a few studies have dealt with the influence of the sex variable on the self concept. In addition, the lack of research dealing with the self concept of the Spanish-American ethnic group provides further rationale for conducting this study. Finally, the sweeping changes in civil rights are most likely affecting the self concepts of the Negro and Spanish-American, two of the most prominent minority groups in the country today. The focus of the present study is on Negro and Spanish-American adolescent self concepts in a transitional period when these two minorities are being subjected to a multiplicity of new and often contradictory influences.

The four hypotheses which were tested are as follows:

1. Spanish-American subjects will exhibit a more positive self concept than Negro subjects, and Anglo subjects will exhibit a more positive self concept than Spanish-American subjects.

2. Subjects will exhibit differing degrees of a positive self concept in direct relation to their positions on the socioeconomic scale.

3. The sex of the subjects will account for differences in their self concept scores.

4. There will be significant interaction effects on the self concept among the variables of ethnicity, socioeconomic position, and sex.

PROCEDURE

Subjects

The study was carried out in a south central New Mexico public school system (estimated population 30,000) in two junior high schools which had a total student population of 2,304 with 700 ninth-grade students. Within the ninth-grade groups, from which the subjects for this study were drawn, the ethnic breakdown of students was as follows: Anglo, 70 per cent; Spanish-American, 24 per cent; and Negro, 6 per cent. These percentages were similar to the ethnic proportions in the State of New Mexico. The census of 1960 established the following ethnic breakdown within New Mexico: white, 63.8 per cent; white with Spanish surname, 28.3 per cent; and non-white, 7.9 per cent.[8]

The total group sample was comprised of all ninth-grade students in these two schools for which four data indices were available: (1) scores on the *Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS)*, (2) scores on the *Hollingshead Two Factor Index of Social Position (ISP)*, (3) classification as to ethnic group membership, and (4) classification as to sex.

Data were available for 630 students. Twenty-three subjects were subsequently eliminated from this original sample for the following reasons: (1) Eight subjects could not be classified on the *ISP* because of incomplete information reported by the subjects. (2) Seven subjects were of different ethnic groups from those used in the study. (3) Six subjects could not be classified as Anglo- or Spanish-American according to the classification method used in this study. (4) Two subjects either failed to understand the instructions for taking the *TSCS* or purposely invalidated their answer sheets. The remaining 607 subjects comprised the sample for this study.

The subjects were assigned to categories on the basis of sex, ethnicity, and social class position. Social class position was determined by use of the *ISP* $\frac{1}{m}$ with the two highest classes, I and II, combined because of the small number of subjects in these classes. Justification for combining these groups into a single classification was based on the work of Janke and Havighurst.[9] This resulted in four socioeconomic groups. These groups with their respective numbers (N's) were as follows: (1) Social Class I-II, N = 130; (2) Social Class III, N = 161; (3) Social Class IV, N = 221; and (4) Social Class V, N = 95.

The total sample was also divided into three ethnic groups: Anglo-, N = 425; Negro-, N = 40; and Spanish-American, N = 142. In addition, the total sample was divided into male and female groups: females, N = 314; and males, N = 293.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in the study were the *Tennessee Self Concept Scale* and the *Hollingshead Two Factor Index of Social Position*.

Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS)

The *TSCS*[10] is a standardized Likert-type instrument. The norms for this scale were developed from a sample of 626 persons. The standardization sample included individuals from various parts of the country who ranged in age from twelve to sixty-eight. Fitts indicated that the norms were based on approximately equal numbers of both sexes of Negro and white subjects representative of all social, economic, and intellectual and educational levels from sixth grade through the doctoral degree.

In using the Clinical and Research Form of the *TSCS*, subjects were assessed on fourteen different components of the self concept scales. These components are described below.

1. *Total Positive.* This score reflected the overall level of self esteem. Individuals possessing high scores felt that they were persons of value and worth, tended to like themselves, and had confidence in themselves. People with low scores seemed to be doubtful about their own worth, saw themselves as undesirable, and had little faith or confidence in themselves. Also, individuals with low scores often felt anxious, depressed, and unhappy.

2. *Identity.* This score reflected how the individual described his basic identity—what he was as he saw himself.

3. *Self Satisfaction.* This score reflected how the individual felt about the self he perceived. In general, it reflected the level of self satisfaction or self acceptance.

4. *Behavior.* This score measured the individual's perception of his own behavior or of the way he functioned.

5. *Physical Self.* This score was an indication of how the individual saw his body, state of health, physical appearance, and motor skills.

6. *Moral-Ethical Self.* This score described the self from a moral-ethical frame of reference: moral worth, relationship to God, and feelings of being a "good" or "bad" person.

7. *Personal Self.* This score reflected the individual's sense of personal worth, his evaluation of himself apart from his body, or his relationship to others. It was a measure of his feelings of adequacy as a person.

8. *Family Self*. This score measured an individual's feelings of adequacy, worth, and value as a family member. It referred to the individual's perception of self in reference to his family.

9. *Social Self*. This score reflected the person's sense of adequacy and worth in his social interaction with other people in general.

10. *Variability*. This score provided a measure of the amount of variability, or inconsistency, from one area of self perception to another. High variability indicated a lack of unity or integration in the person's self concept.

11. *Distribution.* This score was interpreted as a measure of certainty about the way one sees himself. For example, high scores indicated that a person was very definite regarding what he said about himself; low scores meant just the opposite.

12. *Total Conflict*. This score was a measure of the conflict in a person's self concept. High scores indicated confusion, contradiction, and general conflict in self perception; low scores meant better integration, lack of confusion, and lack of conflict in self perception.

13. *Self Criticism*. This scale was composed of mildly derogatory statements which most people admit as being true for themselves. Individuals who denied these types of statements were usually being defensive and made a deliberate effort to present a favorable picture of themselves. Low scores on this scale indicated defensiveness and suggested that the other self concept scales (numbers 1-9 above) were probably artificially elevated by this defensiveness.

14. *Defensive Positive.* This scale was a more subtle measure of defensiveness than the Self Criticism score. A high Defensive Positive score indicated a positive self description stemming from defensive distortion; a significantly low score indicated that the person was lacking in the usual defenses for maintaining even minimal self esteem.

Hollingshead Two Factor Index of Social Position (ISP)

The *ISP*[11] was developed to meet the need for an objective, easily applicable procedure to estimate the positions which individuals occupy in the status structure of our society. The development of this *ISP* was dependent on detailed knowledge of the social structure and of procedures social scientists have used to delineate class position. The *ISP* is premised upon three assumptions: (1) the existence of a status structure in the society, (2) determination of the positions in this structure mainly by a few commonly accepted symbolic characteristics, and (3) scaling and combining the characteristics symbolic of status by the use of statistical procedures so that a researcher can quickly, reliably, and meaningfully stratify the population under study.

Occupation and education are the two factors utilized to determine social position. Two items are essential in order to determine the social position of an individual or of a household: (1) the precise occupational role of the head of the household and (2) the amount of formal schooling he has received. Each of these factors is then scaled and weighted to provide a single score. This score may be assigned to one of five social classes.

When the *ISP* is relied upon to determine class status, differences in individual scores within a specified range are treated as a unit. That there are meaningful differences between the score groups is assumed by this procedure. The assumption of a meaningful correspondence between an estimated class position of individuals and their social behavior has been validated by the use of factor analysis. The validation study demonstrated the existence of classes when mass communication data are used as criteria of social behavior.

Procedure

The *TSCS* was administered, in March of 1969, to all ninth-grade students in two New Mexico junior high schools. A questionnaire—to be used in ascertaining sex, ethnic group membership, and class position—was attached to the *TSCS* answer sheet.

To ensure validity of the *ISP* ratings taken from the data sheet, several precautions were taken. Previous to the administration of the *TSCS* the experimenter, along with the various classroom teachers in whose English classes the scale was given, devised an assignment which required the students to find out their fathers' educational attainments and occupational duties. This assignment was given with the following rationale in mind: First, the students would contribute information for a possible paper which would be done in conjunction with the school's career week, in progress at the time of testing. Second, all questionnaires which did not include occupational or educational information for assignment of social position were investigated.

Ethnic membership was determined by two separate methods. The first method simply required the student to check one of the ethnic designations listed on the questionnaire. The second method required the teacher to classify each student into the ethnic group to which she believed the student belonged. The teachers were instructed beforehand to attempt to base their judgments concerning ethnic membership by referring to the following criteria: physical features, skin color, surname, language usage, and peer associates.

After the tests and questionnaires were collected, students' choices of their ethnic group membership were compared against the teacher's ethnic classifications of the students. Since only six student ethnic designations and teacher designations conflicted (failed to concur on ethnic membership), these six were eliminated from the study.

For each subject, an IBM card was prepared from the data collected. The card contained the sex of the student, ethnic group membership, social class position, and the fourteen scores of the *TSCS* mentioned previously.

Treatment of Data

All hypotheses were tested through the use of a fixed model, three-way classification analysis of variance. The computational procedure for constructing

F-ratios in a three-way classification with unequal cell frequencies was obtained from a method suggested by Myers.[12]

On measures where significant F-ratios were obtained, a t-test for differences among several means with unequal replications was used to determine the significance of differences among the means. The computational procedure for this t-test was suggested by Bruning and Kintz.[13]

Results

All of the hypotheses were tested using a fixed model, three-way classification analysis of variance. Where significant F-ratios were found, the t-test was used to determine which specific means differed significantly from one another. To test the requirement that the population variances were equal or homogeneous, the F-test was computed to test the assumption of homogeneity of variance.[14] The test indicated that the assumption was tenable for all measures utilized in the study.

The subjects' scores on the fourteen measures of self concept were tested by the foregoing model. The means and standard deviations of the scores on the fourteen scales of the *TSCS* are reported in Tables, I, II, and III. The scores in these tables are arranged

TABLE I

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE SCORES ON THE FOURTEEN SCALES OF THE *TSCS* ARRANGED BY SEX

TSCS Scales	Sex			
	Male		Female	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Total Positive	322.97	11.63	322.47	8.56
Identity	120.86	3.16	121.17	3.09
Self Satisfaction	99.57	5.95	96.09	5.38
Behavior	102.55	4.13	105.20	2.54
Physical Self	69.85	3.00	67.07	1.85
Moral-Ethical Self	61.17	2.67	63.50	2.65
Personal Self	63.71	2.97	61.50	2.11
Family Self	65.06	2.73	65.06	2.05
Social Self	63.13	2.31	65.29	2.67
Self Criticism	35.39	1.96	34.98	2.61
Total Conflict	38.41	3.84	35.51	4.21
Variability	54.03	2.58	54.98	6.61
Distribution	111.80	6.99	110.23	1.18
Defensive Positive	54.97	4.35	53.73	5.29

TABLE II

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE SCORES ON THE FOURTEEN SCALES OF THE *TSCS* ARRANGED BY ETHNIC GROUP

TSCS Scales	Ethnic Group					
	Anglo		Negro		Spanish-American	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Total Positive	317.75	5.59	321.69	7.58	328.70	12.75
Identity	119.88	1.94	122.23	3.77	120.94	2.94
Self Satisfaction	94.39	3.05	96.26	4.37	102.36	6.73
Behavior	102.99	2.62	103.20	3.71	105.43	4.03
Physical Self	66.56	1.43	69.37	3.06	69.46	2.76
Moral-Ethical Self	62.20	2.01	60.37	1.41	64.47	3.30
Personal Self	61.26	1.32	62.38	3.44	64.20	2.37
Family Self	64.25	.91	65.33	2.23	65.62	3.27
Social Self	63.47	2.17	64.25	2.70	64.93	3.02
Self Criticism	37.01	1.42	34.40	2.70	34.16	1.33
Total Conflict	35.25	2.57	39.28	4.27	36.35	4.64
Variability	55.81	1.97	54.53	8.09	53.18	1.83
Distribution	110.84	4.55	111.51	13.68	110.68	8.69
Defensive Positive	49.40	1.63	57.45	4.70	56.21	3.05

TABLE III

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE SCORES ON THE FOURTEEN SCALES OF THE *TSCS* ARRANGED BY SOCIOECONOMIC POSITION

TSCS Scales	Socioeconomic Position							
	I-II		III		IV		V	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Total Positive	328.67	10.57	328.63	9.66	315.74	4.34	317.82	7.10
Identity	121.68	2.42	123.41	2.48	118.54	1.97	120.43	3.26
Self Satisfaction	102.83	6.63	99.59	4.80	94.66	3.26	94.25	3.46
Behavior	104.18	2.93	105.66	3.58	102.53	3.38	103.13	3.94
Physical Self	69.54	3.01	69.15	3.84	68.09	1.14	67.08	1.94
Moral-Ethical Self	63.30	4.16	62.95	2.84	61.56	1.87	61.56	1.52
Personal Self	63.61	2.10	64.16	2.68	60.72	1.76	61.96	2.18
Family Self	66.25	1.69	66.57	2.60	63.05	1.25	64.39	1.10
Social Self	65.99	2.47	65.77	1.05	62.31	1.87	62.78	2.76
Self Criticism	33.88	3.33	35.48	1.16	35.54	1.15	35.87	2.30
Total Conflict	36.03	2.85	34.18	4.21	38.83	4.40	38.79	3.56
Variability	51.66	2.97	52.30	2.57	57.46	7.40	56.62	2.29
Distribution	108.89	6.98	109.86	8.46	113.89	14.48	111.41	5.85
Defensive Positive	57.44	7.02	54.96	4.19	52.50	1.33	52.51	3.16

by sex, ethnic group, and social class position. Six of the fourteen measures were found to be influenced significantly by one or more of the independent variables. The eight measures which were unaffected by the independent variables included: Total Positive, Identity, Behavior, Personal Self, Family Self, Variability, Distribution, and Total Conflict. With the exception of the Total Positive score, no further mention is made of these eight scores in the results section.

The Total Positive score, though not significantly influenced by any of the variables, is discussed throughout this publication because it is considered to be the most important single score since it reflected the overall level of self esteem.

Data on Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis tested was that the Spanish-American subjects would exhibit a more positive self concept than the Negro subjects, and that the Anglo subjects would exhibit a more positive self concept than the Spanish-American subjects. Analysis of variance for the effect of the ethnic variable did not support this hypothesis. Mean Total Positive scores of the Anglo-, Negro-, and Spanish-American groups were 317.75, 321.69, and 328.70, respectively. The differences between these means were not significant ($F = 1.94$, $df = 2/583$) at the .05 level of confidence as indicated by Table IV.

The other measures of self concept, Self Satisfaction and Moral-Ethical Self, were found to be influenced by the ethnic variable although they did not provide support for the first hypothesis.

Self Satisfaction scores, which reflected the level of self acceptance, were highest for the Spanish-American group and lowest for the Anglo group. The respective Self Satisfaction score means for the Anglo-, Negro-, and Spanish-American groups were 94.39, 96.26, and 102.36. These mean differences were significant ($F = 4.39$, $df = 2/583$) beyond the .025 level of confidence (Table V). A t-test for differences among several means with unequal replications was utilized to determine which ethnic group means were significantly different. The results indicated that the mean score differences between the Anglo and Negro group were significant at the .05 level of confidence. In addition, the Anglo and Negro mean scores differed significantly from the Spanish-American mean score at the .005 level of confidence.

The second measure of self concept which was affected by the influence of the ethnic variable was the Moral-Ethical Self. On this self concept measure, the Spanish-American group, with a mean score of 64.47, was the highest of the three groups; the Anglo group, with a mean score of 62.20, was second; and the Negro group was lowest, with a mean score of 60.37. These differences were significant at the .05 level (Table VI). The results of a t-test revealed that the differences among the three ethnic group means were significantly different at the .0005 level.

TABLE IV

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF THE TOTAL POSITIVE SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	1.46	1	1.46	< 1
Ethnicity (E)	492.30	2	246.15	1.94
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	859.47	3	286.49	2.25
S X E	47.94	2	23.97	< 1
S X SP	209.85	3	69.95	< 1
E X SP	727.28	6	121.21	< 1
S X E X SP	166.95	6	27.82	< 1
Within	74082.52	583	127.07	
Total	76587.76	606		

TABLE V

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF SELF SATISFACTION SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	72.38	1	72.38	2.51
Ethnicity (E)	253.32	2	126.66	4.39**
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	305.67	3	101.89	3.53*
S X E	28.89	2	14.45	< 1
S X SP	8.79	3	2.93	< 1
E X SP	134.46	6	22.41	< 1
S X E X SP	39.94	6	6.66	< 1
Within	16823.75	583	28.86	
Total	17667.20	606		

*P < .05
**P < .025

TABLE VI

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MORAL-ETHICAL SELF CONCEPT SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	32.55	1	32.55	3.37
Ethnicity (E)	67.36	2	33.68	3.48*
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	14.99	3	4.99	< 1
S X E	2.48	2	1.24	< 1
S X SP	17.07	3	5.69	< 1
E X SP	58.45	6	9.74	1.01
S X E X SP	9.52	6	1.59	< 1
Within	5638.25	583	9.67	
Total	5840.67	606		

*P < .05

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis tested was that subjects would exhibit differing degrees of a positive self concept in direct relation to their positions on the socioeconomic scale. It was expected that more positive self concept scores would be found in the higher socioeconomic class positions. The reverse would also be true—that is, lower self concept scores would be exhibited by individuals from the lower socioeconomic positions. In terms of the Total Positive score, the data failed to support this hypothesis.

Partial support for this hypothesis was found on two measures of self concept, Social Self and Self Satisfaction. Moving from the lowest social class position to the highest social class position, the mean Social Self scores were V = 62.78, IV = 62.31, III = 65.77, and II-I = 65.99. These means differed significantly (F = 2.99, df = 3/583) at the .05 level of confidence (Table VII). A t-test was used to determine further which social class means differed significantly. Results indicated that all means were significantly different at the .05 level. Not only did the means differ significantly at the .05 level, but all means were significantly different at the .001 level with the exception of Social Classes I-II and III.

The other self concept measure which provided support for the second hypothesis was the Self Satisfaction score. The respective Self Satisfaction score means for Social Class V (the lowest socioeconomic position), Social Class IV, Social Class III, and the combined Social Classes II and I were 94.25, 94.66, 99.60, and 102.83, respectively. The differences between these means were significant (F = 3.53, df = 3/583) beyond the .05 level of confidence (Table V). The results of a t-test on these mean scores indicated that all means were significantly different at the .05 level and, with the exception of Social Classes IV and V, these mean score differences were significant at the .001 level.

TABLE VII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF SOCIAL SELF CONCEPT SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	28.10	1	28.10	3.74
Ethnicity (E)	8.61	2	4.31	<1
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	67.47	3	22.49	2.99*
S X E	.41	2	.20	<1
S X SP	8.85	3	2.95	<1
E X SP	48.51	6	8.08	1.08
S X E X SP	15.66	6	2.61	<1
Within	4378.81	583	7.51	
Total	4556.43	606		

*$P < .05$

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis tested was that the sex of the subjects would account for differences in the self concept scores. In terms of the Total Positive score, the results of this study failed to support the third hypothesis. Partial support for this hypothesis was found in the data obtained on the Physical Self scores. The mean for the male subjects' Physical Self scores was 69.85. This was significantly higher ($F = 5.53$, $df = 1/583$, $P = .025$) than the mean score (67.07) which the girls obtained on this measure of Physical Self (Table VIII).

Hypothesis Four

The fourth and final hypothesis tested was that there would be significant interaction effects on the self concept among the variables of ethnicity, socioeconomic position, and sex. The results of this study failed to confirm this hypothesis. No significant interaction effects were found on any measures of self concept.

Additional Findings

Two very significant findings, evidenced by the results of this study but not directly covered by the hypotheses, dealt with the important measures of Self Criticism and Defensive Positiveness.

A basic consideration in the interpretation of self description data is the willingness of the respondent to convey derogatory information about himself. The Self Criticism score and the Defensive Positive score were incorporated into the *TSCS* by the test author to enable the user to locate those individuals who were being defensive as they described themselves and those who made a deliberate effort to present a favorable picture of themselves. Low Self Criticism scores indicated defensiveness and suggested that the positive scores (e.g., Total Positive, Identity, Self Satisfaction, and Behavior) may be elevated artificially by this defensiveness. The results of this study illustrated that the Negro- and Spanish-American groups were considerably more defensive than the Anglo group. The mean Self Criticism scores for the Spanish-American, Negro, and Anglo groups were 34.16, 34.40, and 37.01, respectively. These differences were significant ($F = 4.73$, $df = 2/583$) at the .01 level of confidence (Table IX). The results of a t-test on these three means showed the difference between the Negro- and Spanish-American mean scores to be significant at the .05 level. The Anglo and Negro mean score differences and the Anglo- and Spanish-American mean score differences were significant at the .0005 level.

High Defensive Positive scores indicated a positive self description which was the result of defensive distortion. The Spanish-American and Negro group mean scores were 56.20 and 57.45, respectively. The Anglo group mean was 49.40. The differences between these means were significant ($F = 7.86$, $df = 2/583$) beyond the .001 level of confidence (Table X). The results of a t-test, used to determine which ethnic group

TABLE VIII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF PHYSICAL SELF CONCEPT SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	46.15	1	46.15	5.53**
Ethnicity (E)	43.55	2	21.77	2.61
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	22.18	3	7.39	.89
S X E	9.53	2	4.77	<1
S X SP	20.35	3	6.78	<1
E X SP	25.21	6	4.20	<1
S X E X SP	28.55	6	4.76	<1
Within	4866.74	583	8.35	
Total	5062.26	606		

**P < .025

TABLE IX

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF SELF CRITICISM SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	1.01	1	1.01	<1
Ethnicity (E)	39.97	2	19.98	4.73***
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	14.37	3	4.79	1.13
S X E	9.99	2	4.99	1.18
S X SP	14.31	3	4.77	1.12
E X SP	44.39	6	7.40	1.75
S X E X SP	4.70	6	.78	<1
Within	2463.23	583	4.23	
Total	2591.96	606		

***P < .01

TABLE X

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF DEFENSIVE POSITIVE SCORES

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Sex (S)	9.35	1	9.35	<1
Ethnicity (E)	300.49	2	150.23	7.86****
Socioeconomic Position (SP)	100.36	3	33.45	1.75
S X E	13.36	2	6.68	<1
S X SP	21.77	3	7.26	<1
E X SP	120.62	6	20.10	1.05
S X E X SP	6.49	6	1.08	<1
Within	11145.42	583	19.12	
Total	11717.86	606		

****P < .001

means were significant, indicated that all means differed significantly at the .0005 level of confidence.

Discussion of Results

Of the fourteen measures of self concept assessed in this study, four scores were affected by the ethnic variable: Self Criticism, Defensive Positive, Self Satisfaction, and Moral-Ethical Self. Before discussing these four scores, an explanation of results dealing with the Total Positive score is essential. This score was designated as the most important score of the *TSCS* since it is an overall measure of self esteem. Nevertheless, this measure of self concept was not affected by any of the independent variables in this study. With regard to the first hypothesis, the Total Positive score did not differ significantly among the three ethnic groups as was predicted. In fact, the means of the Total Positive scores exhibited by the three ethnic groups were contradictory with regard to the direction they should have taken according to the first hypothesis. Instead of having the highest mean score, the Anglo group had the lowest mean score. The Negro group scores, which were expected to be the lowest in terms of mean self concept scores, fell between the Anglo- and Spanish-American groups. The Spanish-American self concept scores, instead of falling between the Anglo and Negro groups, were the highest of the three ethnic groups. This apparent contradiction and the failure to find any significant ethnic differences in self concept can probably be accounted for by the findings discussed below.

First, upon examination of the Self Criticism and Defensive Positive scores, it is very apparent that significant differences existed between the three ethnic groups on both of these measures. The Self Criticism scores for the two minority groups were significantly below the Self Criticism scores for the Anglo group. The Self Criticism score, as previously mentioned, is an indication or measure of defensiveness and this defensiveness could have elevated artificially the Total Positive scores. This helps to explain the higher means on the Total Positive score for the two minority groups. Further evidence that the Total Positive scores may have been elevated artificially for the two minority groups was provided by the results obtained on the Defensive Positive scores. The mean scores of 56.21 and 57.45 for the Spanish-American and Negro groups, respectively, were significantly higher than the 49.38 Anglo mean score.

In summary, it appears that the Total Positive scores of the Negro- and Spanish-American groups were probably higher than they would have been if the individuals in these two ethnic groups had not responded so defensively. Therefore, it seems a reasonable precaution that the findings of this study must be interpreted with this fact regarding defensiveness in mind.

A second explanation which might provide some evidence for the failure of this study to confirm the first hypothesis, and which would also help to explain why none of the independent variables had an effect on the Total Positive score, is provided by Wylie.[15] She had questioned the validity of studying the self concept as an overall or

global self evaluative attitude. She stated that the weak trends and lack of comparability among studies which treat the self concept as a global measure may be partly due to an unanalytical approach to self, regarding attitudes. Therefore, the results of this study which found the overall measure of self esteem unaffected by the three independent variables are in keeping with Wylie's findings.

Self Satisfaction, a score which was significantly affected by the ethnic variable, also exhibited the same confounding results that the Total Positive score exhibited. That is, the Spanish-Americans were the most accepting of the self they perceived; the Negro group scored second on this measure; and the Anglo group scored lowest, thus being the least accepting of the self they perceived. This finding can be interpreted in two ways. First, the Self Satisfaction score may be elevated artificially as was previously conjectured for the Total Positive score. The defensiveness of the two minority groups may be responsible for the findings associated with the Self Satisfaction score. A second interpretation is that the Spanish-American and Negro groups were in fact more satisfied with the way they perceived themselves than was the Anglo group because the two minority groups' own ethnicities established norms by which they judged themselves.

Self Satisfaction, as assessed in this study, may have been the measure which Carter[16] was tapping through his research on self concept of Mexican-Americans, in which he found no differences in feelings of self worth between Mexican-American and Anglo students. Although Carter's work dealt only with Mexican-Americans, it might be conjectured that Negroes, also belonging to a minority group and having their cultural identifications, would operate similarly in terms of perception of self because of their minority group membership.

A final measure of self concept, apparently affected by the ethnic variable, was the measure of Moral-Ethical Self. The results of this study showed that on this measure the Spanish-American subjects scored highest; Anglo subjects scored second; and Negro subjects scored lowest. Although only conjecture at this point, this finding may be attributable to the important role that religion plays in the Spanish-American culture. About one-third of the questions from the Moral-Ethical measure dealt with how the individual feels about his relationship to God and his satisfaction with his religion, or his lack of religion. According to Ulibarri,[17] the process of acculturation for the Spanish-Americans has affected all aspects of their lives. However, religion, which has been a cornerstone of their moral code, has been affected least by the transition from the culture of the past to the culture of the present. Ulibarri further contended that religion is still vital to most Spanish-Americans, regardless of religious denomination.

The second hypothesis was confirmed on two of the fourteen scales utilized in this study: Social Self and Self Satisfaction. However, once again the overall general measure of self concept, the Total Positive score, did not differ significantly among the four socioeconomic class positions. On the other hand, one of the specific measures of self concept, the Social Self, which is a measure of a person's sense of adequacy and worth in his social interaction with other people in general, exemplified the expectation that as one's socioeconomic position increases there is an accompanying increase in the self

concept. Even though the mean score for Social Class V was greater than the mean for Social Class IV, the overall trend of these Social Self means was to increase as social class position increased. This finding seems reasonable when one considers that, in American society, social class position is often interpreted as a measure of a person's worth, with individuals belonging to higher socioeconomic positions being accorded higher status and more prestige. It may be hypothesized that these positions of status with their attached prestige are often the major sources from which is drawn our sense of adequacy and self worth, especially in terms of a social self image.

In keeping with the above rationale, the results of the Self Satisfaction scores across socioeconomic position indicated that individuals in the lower socioeconomic classes were not as satisfied or accepting with the way in which they saw themselves as were those individuals in the higher socioeconomic positions.

The third hypothesis with regard to the Total Positive score was not affected significantly by sex differences. However, Physical Self, a specific measure of the total self concept, was affected significantly by sex differences and thus provided partial support for the third hypothesis. Male subjects had significantly higher self concepts than female subjects with regard to their physical appearance, health, skills, and sexuality. This finding can probably be explained if one takes into consideration the age and grade level of the subjects. For example, Jersild[18] found that boys were not as concerned about their physical appearances at the ninth-grade level as girls. Therefore, there exists some evidence indicating that, at least at the ninth-grade level, girls may be overly critical of their appearances and ability to attract members of the opposite sex.

The failure to confirm the fourth hypothesis, which dealt with significant interaction effects, is not difficult to account for in light of the conflicting results obtained by previous studies. It was hypothesized that there would be interaction between the sex and ethnic variables as was found in Williams and Byars'[19] study. However, in keeping with the findings of the present study, Gaier and Wambach[20] concluded that no differences existed in the self concepts of Negro males and females.

It was also hypothesized that self concept scores would vary across socioeconomic position within each of the three ethnic groups. This hypothesis was made on the basis of previous findings which showed the influences of socioeconomic and ethnic differences. It was assumed that if the socioeconomic variable were responsible for self concept differences, then these differences should occur not only as a main effect of the socioeconomic variable but within the ethnic groups as well. The results of this study provided no evidence to support this hypothesis.

Conclusions

1. Male and female subjects, subjects from different socioeconomic positions, and subjects from different ethnic groups did not differ significantly with regard to their overall level of self esteem. Sex, social class position, and ethnic group membership

made no difference in terms of how the subjects perceived their worth, liked themselves, or had confidence in themselves.

2. Sex, socioeconomic position, and ethnic group membership accounted for differences in the self concepts of the subjects although the influence of these variables was limited to specific dimensions of the subjects' self concepts. Specific dimensions of the self concept which were influenced by the variables under study were Physical Self, Moral-Ethical Self, Social Self, Self Satisfaction, Self Criticism, and Defensive Positiveness.

3. When compared with female subjects, the male subjects reflected that they were more confident or positive about the way in which they evaluated Physical Self. The boys had higher self concepts than girls with regard to physical appearance, state of health, body or motor skills, and sexuality.

4. The socioeconomic class variable was influential with regard to the measure of Social Self. Subjects from the lower social classes did not exhibit the sense of adequacy and worth in social interaction with people in general that subjects from the upper social classes exhibited.

5. As socioeconomic class position increased, the level of satisfaction with the way in which subjects saw themselves increased.

6. Ethnic group membership was an influential variable in terms of how the subjects perceived themselves on the Moral-Ethical dimension of the self. In terms of the individual's perception of his moral worth, his relationship to God, and his feelings of being a "good" or "bad" person, the Spanish-American subjects scored highest. The Anglo and Negro subjects followed respectively.

7. Ethnic group membership appeared to have some influence on the degree of satisfaction an individual had with the way he saw himself. As a group, the Spanish-Americans were the most satisfied with the way they perceived themselves. On the Self Satisfaction measure, the Negro and Anglo groups followed respectively.

8. The Spanish-American and Negro subjects were less willing than the Anglo subjects to convey derogatory information about themselves. Self Criticism scores of male and female Spanish-American and Negro subjects indicated that they were significantly more defensive about their reported self esteem than were the Anglo subjects.

9. On the Defensive Positive score, which is an indication of a positive self description stemming from defensive distortion of the self, Negro and Spanish-American subjects exhibited a greater amount of defensive distortion in their self descriptions than the Anglo subjects.

Implications for School Personnel

The results of this study demonstrated that sex, socioeconomic position, and ethnic group membership are important in terms of their influence on an individual's self concept. These factors do influence the way in which students perceive themselves.

However, none of these variables is so influential that it is singularly responsible for the development of an individual's global self concept. Rather, sex, socioeconomic position, and ethnic group membership appear to exert their influence on specific dimensions of an individual's self esteem.

One implication of this investigation is that minority group students are generally less willing to convey derogatory information about themselves and therefore are less apt to communicate their true feelings to the school personnel working with them. Particularly with the students who come from a minority ethnic group, there appears to be more need for this individual to present himself in a positive way. The unwillingness on the part of the Spanish-American and Negro students to admit self debasing information about themselves is probably the result of the present civil rights movement with its emphasis on racial pride and self respect.

Teachers and counselors also need to be aware that students from different socioeconomic classes perceive themselves differently on specific dimensions of the self concept. For example, this study indicated that students from lower socioeconomic classes have feelings of inadequacy in situations demanding social interaction with their peers. Therefore, teachers should take into account that students from the lower socioeconomic classes may be unwilling or afraid to interact in the classroom and at other school activities. In addition, counselors should be aware that students from lower socioeconomic classes may be hesitant about interacting in group guidance or counseling situations because of their feelings of inadequacy in social situations. Thus, this resistance may be one of the major obstacles to overcome before the counseling process progresses.

Students from the lower social classes are also more likely to be dissatisfied with the self they perceive. Knowledge of this fact is important if the counselor sincerely desires to understand and relate to his counselees. The counselor, being aware of this dissatisfaction, should help the student explore himself in order to set realistic objectives in the student's educational, personal, and vocational planning.

Based on these considerations, it is recommended that the findings of this study be made available to interested school personnel. It is the writer's contention that a broadened understanding of students will occur from knowledge of the results of this study. Therefore, school personnel who are familiar with these findings should be more able to recognize and to meet students' needs.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Studies should be conducted which could determine to what extent the findings of this study apply for different age levels (i.e., adults as compared with the adolescents of this study). Writers such as Coleman[21] and Kelly[22] have theorized that adolescents possess a culture of their own, including their own values and norms, which may be considerably different from the values and norms of the adult world.

2. This study should be replicated in other settings. Ethnic group members from a rural and urban setting should be compared directly on the same instrument measuring self concept. It might be hypothesized that individuals from a rural background possess different evaluations of self than individuals from an urban area.

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